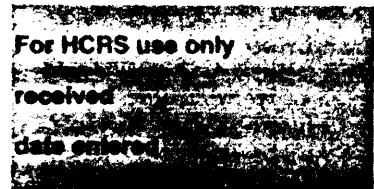


**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**



**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic Birmingham, Railway, Light and Power Building

and/or common Collateral Insurance Agency Building

**2. Location**

street & number 2100 First Avenue, North not for publication

city, town Birmingham vicinity of congressional district 6

state Alabama code 01 county Jefferson code 073

**3. Classification**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Collateral Insurance Agency

street & number 2100 First Avenue, North

city, town Birmingham vicinity of state Alabama 35203

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Jefferson County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Birmingham state Alabama

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Alabama Inventory has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1978-present  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Alabama Historical Commission

city, town Montgomery state Alabama

## 7. Description

---

**Condition**

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

**Check one**

unaltered  
 altered

**Check one**

original site  
 moved date \_\_\_\_\_

---

**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

This seven-story Commercial style office building is faced on two sides with white terra cotta panels that give it a highly decorative effect. Piers that rise unadorned and unbroken to stylized capitals beneath the cornice provide a strong vertical emphasis that is balanced by groups of windows in threes, with richly detailed mullions and spandrels, adding a contrasting horizontal interest. At the cornice line is a frieze decorated with panels of wreaths and shields. Anthemion cresting on the projecting cornice provides a profile on three sides of the building that is both delicate and lively. Larger anthemions and lion heads in the cornice align with the shields and vertical piers to give a clear order and balance to the facade. The original building dates from 1915. A fire destroyed much of the building in 1926; it was rebuilt the same year. The ground floor has been remodelled without changing the structure's essential lines, although the facing was removed and the width of the piers reduced. Nothing of significance remains on the interior. The building was recently rehabilitated by its present owners.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1915/1926 Builder/Architect \_\_\_\_\_

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

This structure was built to house the main offices of the Birmingham Railway, Light and Power Company, the city's privately owned transportation and utility corporation, which provided street car service and electric power to the early city and continued to do so as the Birmingham Electric Company until the 1950s. The large, brilliant white building at a major entry to downtown presents a striking visual contrast to the brick structures that predominate in this vicinity of First Avenue. It is an excellent example of the rich use of materials and classical details that typified Birmingham architecture during the prosperous 1920s. The building faces the Romanesque Revival Steiner Bank Building (1890, NRHP: 6/25/74) and the Protective Life-Commerce Center (1928), an Art Deco skyscraper, on the south side of the intersection.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

White, Marjorie L. Downtown Birmingham-Architectural and Historical Walking Tour Guide, Birmingham Historical Society and First National Bank of Birmingham, Birmingham Publishing Company, 1977.

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property less than 1 acre

Quadrangle name Birmingham North

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A 

1	6	5	1	8	1	9	0	3	7	0	8	2	3	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

B 

Zone	Easting				Northing									

C 

Zone	Easting				Northing									

D 

Zone	Easting				Northing									

E 

Zone	Easting				Northing									

F 

Zone	Easting				Northing									

G 

Zone	Easting				Northing									

H 

Zone	Easting				Northing									

Verbal boundary description and justification

New BI (40) P (13, 14, 15) 100x140

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state code county code

state code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ellen Mertins/Alice Bowsher, Marjorie White (Birmingham Historical Society)

organization Alabama Historical Commission

date January 14, 1980

street & number 725 Monroe Street

telephone (205) 832-6621

city or town Montgomery

state Alabama 36130

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title date

For HCERS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

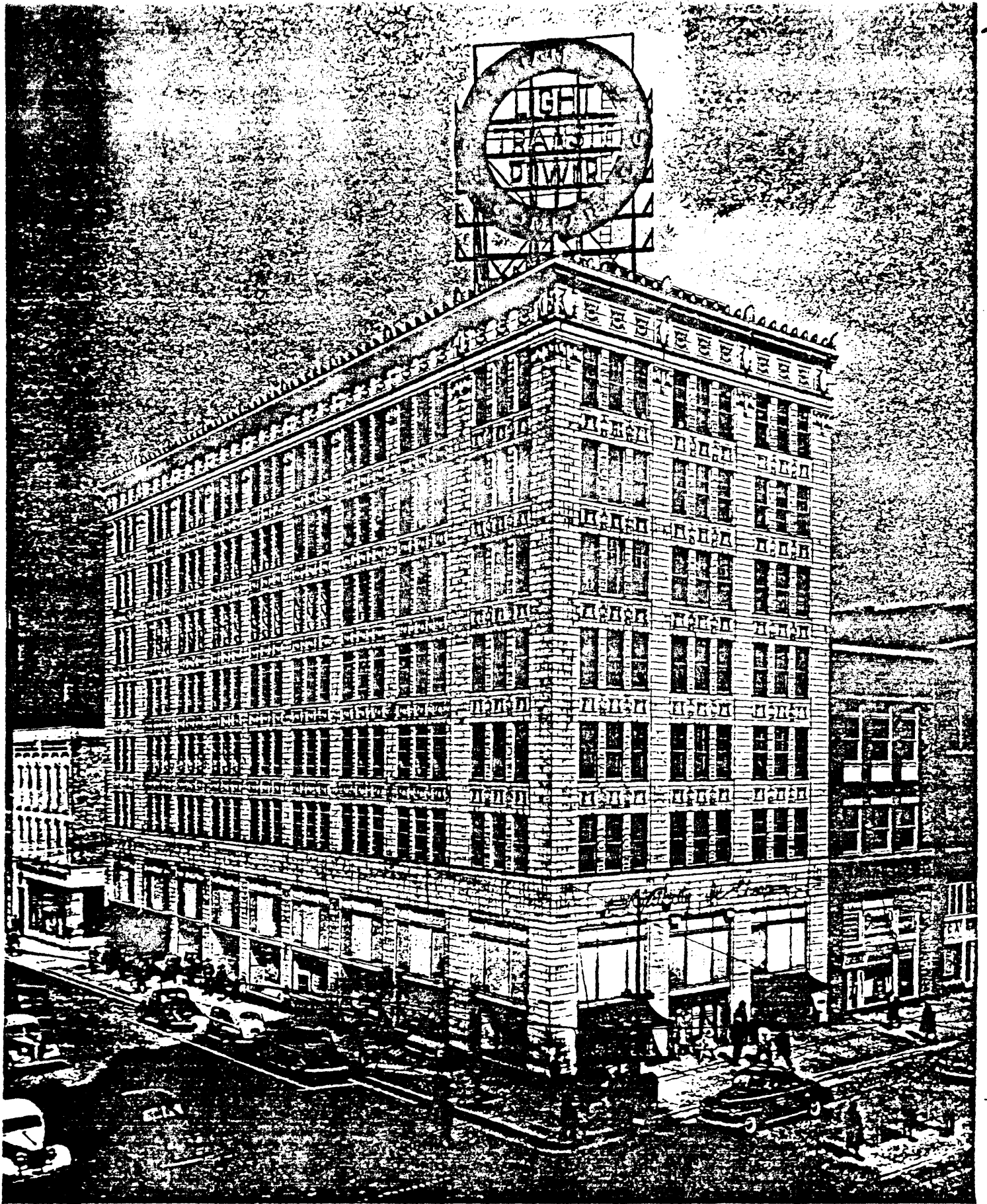
date

Keeper of the National Register

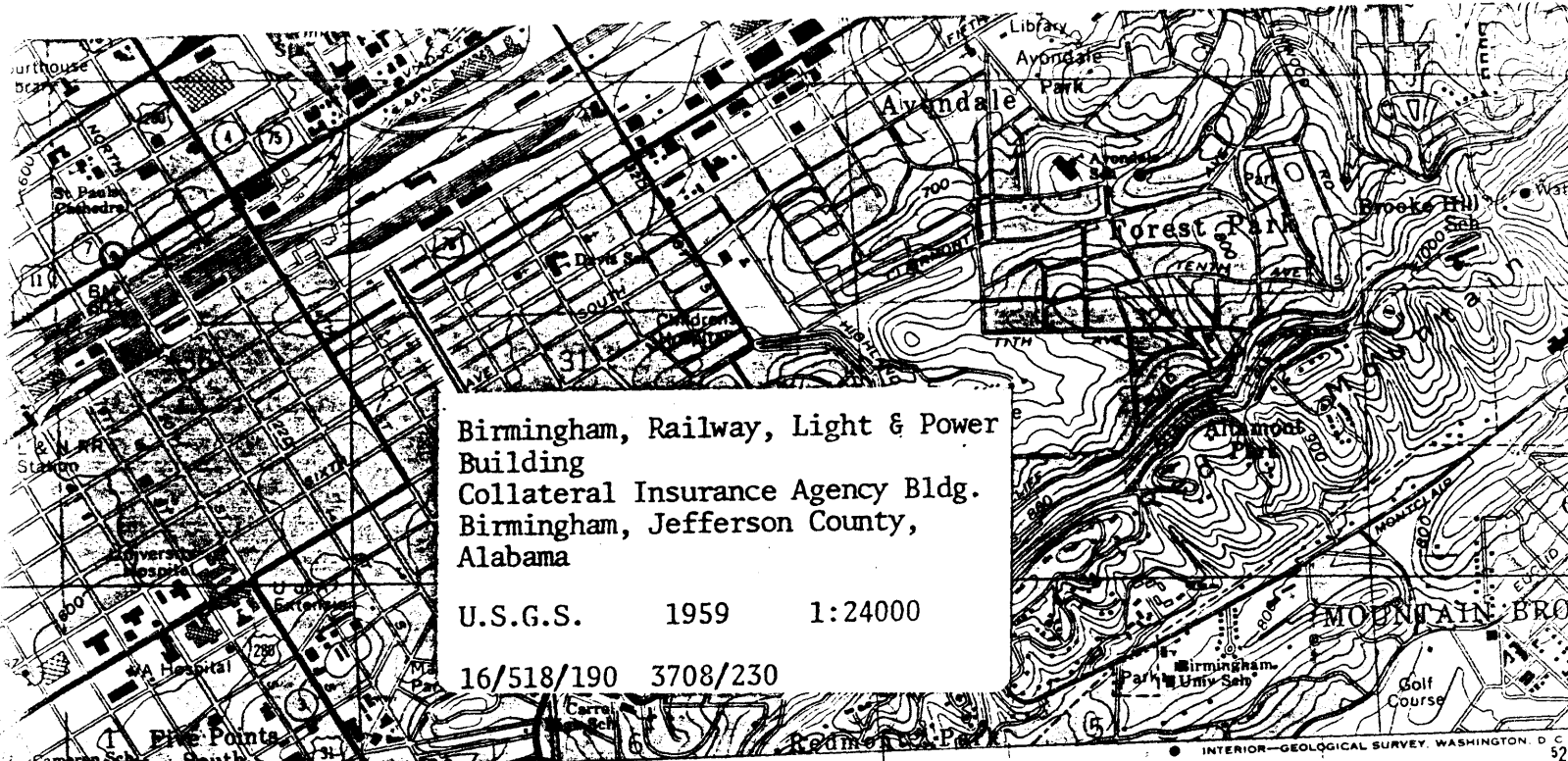
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration



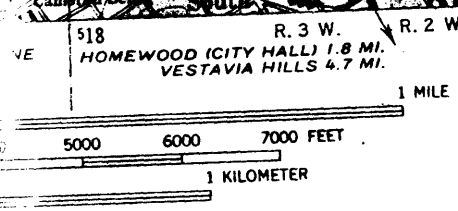
Birmingham Railway, Light & Power  
(now Collateral Insurance Agency Building)  
N.E. Corner 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. & 21<sup>st</sup> St. No.



Birmingham, Railway, Light & Power Building  
 Collateral Insurance Agency Bldg.  
 Birmingham, Jefferson County, Alabama

U.S.G.S. 1959 1:24000

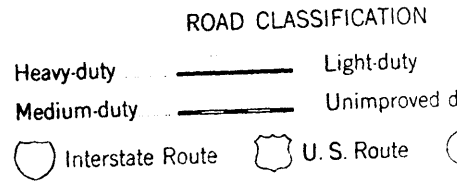
16/518/190 3708/230



R. 3 W. R. 2 W. 47'30"  
 2.5 MI. TO ALA; 149 HARPERVILLE (U.S. 23) 30 MI.



ALABAMA  
 QUADRANGLE LOCATION



BIRMINGHAM NORTH  
 SE/4 BIRMINGHAM COAL DISTRICT 15  
 N3330—W8645/7.

ACCURACY STANDARDS  
 WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242  
 PHOTODUPLICATIONS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

1959  
 PHOTOREVISED 197  
 AMS 3651 III SE-SERIES



Historic Resources of Downtown Birmingham  
Birmingham Railway, Light & Power Building  
NE Corner 1st Ave. & 21st St. N.  
Birmingham, Ala.  
Inventory Number 20  
View from Southeast  
Richard W. Sprague, 1979  
Birmingham Historical Society